



JEWISH Voice

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A NEW YEAR, A NEW BEGINNING

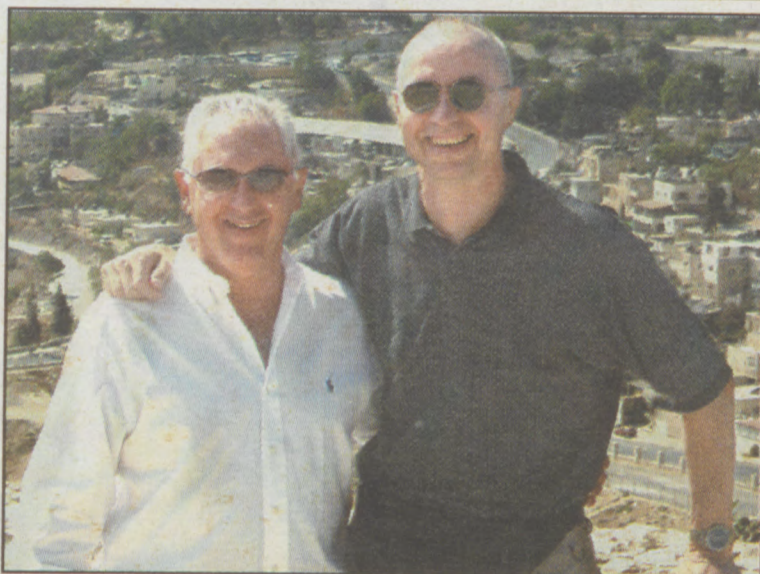
By Jack Zigon,
Director JCRC and Planning

It is with great sadness that as of January 15, 2005, I'm resigning as the Director of JCRC and Planning for the Jewish Federation of Delaware. But also I have to say, I'm pretty excited about my new role as Senior Advisor for Strategy and Media at The Israel Project in Washington, DC. They are a new non-profit organization devoted to providing the public with an accurate image of Israel in order to help protect and strengthen the only democratic nation in the Middle East, reduce anti-Semitism and increase pride in our Jewish homeland. For more information please visit their website at <http://www.theisraelproject.org>.

I can't tell you how much I've enjoyed working with the Delaware Jewish community on both community relations and planning issues. Before I took the job, I called friends to find out about this community and was told that it was a wonderful place to work and I should jump at the opportunity. My sources were right – as we say when talking about some of our recent successes – "We're small, but we're great!" I think we've accomplished a lot together in the last year and I hope you agree. Thank you, from the bottom of my heart, for the opportunity to serve you.

In my new role with The Israel Project, I'll be responsible for re-designing and maintaining their website, managing relationships with 1,400 journalists in the USA and world-wide who write about Israel in all major media (TV, radio and print), ghost-writing all op-eds, letters to the editor and speeches for both US activists as well as Israeli government spokespersons, training media activists in eight cities in the US to approach their local journalists and pitch stories which portray Israel in a positive light, and more. It's a dream job that completes my goal of making a career-change from 20+ years as a management consultant to Israel advocate.

I hope to maintain contact with the Delaware community through the *Jewish Voice* as well through as the person who follows me as Director JCRC and Planning. Please feel free to contact me by email at jack@zigonperf.com or on my cell at 610-291-5884. I'll be working out of The Israel Project's Washington office, but will continue to live in Wallingford, PA, so email and my cell will continue to be the best way to



JFD President Barry S. Kayne and Jack Zigon share a moment in Jerusalem.

reach me in this 24/7/365 world of Israel advocacy.

As I make the transition to my new position on January 17, 2005, I'd like to offer you these ten tips to help you win the hearts and minds of those around you concerning Israel. We've come a long way in Delaware, but we still have a long way to go.

10 Tips to Help Win Hearts and Minds for Israel

Dramatic public opinion research shows that while 52% of Americans have a Jewish friend, co-worker or family member, 74% of non-Jewish Americans with a Jewish contact report that not one Jew has spoken with them in support of Israel in the last 12 months. Not even once. The same research, however, shows that just ONE conversation between a Jew and a non-Jew about Israel can make people dramatically more supportive of Israel. So how can you – in your conversations, speeches, letters to the editor and other forms of outreach - help win hearts and minds for Israel?

Here are ten tips to help you get started:

1. Americans Want a Team to Cheer For.

Whether it is the Yankees, Red Socks, or UDEL – whomever – Americans love to have a team to cheer for.

And what one thing, above all else, will cause a broad array of Americans to cheer for Israel? The fact that Israel is a democracy where all citizens, both men and

women - Christians, Moslems and Jews - have freedom of speech, religion, press and a right to vote.

2. Israel wants Peace.

It's up to us to inform the public that Israel has been, and will always be, willing to make painful sacrifices for peace.

But don't just say that Israel wants peace – PROVE it. Let people know (because many don't) that Israel gave up the Sinai for

peace with Egypt.

Let people know that Israel offered the Palestinians a state, time and again – and that Arafat and others rejected it.

Israel is a democracy that is suffering from terrorism, but that still wants peace.

3. It's About the Future, Not the Past.

Americans today are part of the "what have you done for me lately" and "what will you give me in the future" culture. If you say that "Jews have lived in Israel for thousands of years and G-d promised us the land" many Americans will hear "this is a conflict that has been going on for thousands of years and it will never end. It's like the Hatfield's and the McCoy's. Why should America invest the time and energy of its President and its tax dollars in helping it?" Additionally, secular and liberal audiences who believe in the separation of church and state aren't interested in supporting someone else's claim handed down by G-d.

Americans don't really care how many wars Israel has fought in self-defense. They worry about things like terrorism and gas prices. They don't care who is right or wrong in the conflict as much as they want a

quick solution. You need to focus on a better future for both Israel AND the Palestinians.

4. SICK – Stop Indoctrinating Children to Kill

Explain that peace cannot come while Palestinian children are raised in a culture of hate and a cult of death. The Palestinians (and Syrians for that matter!) cannot promote peace and terror at the same time.

Peace will happen when Palestinian textbooks, cartoons, music and TV programs no longer indoctrinate kids to become terrorists.

5. Remember Moses

Moses was a pretty sharp guy – and he had the ear of G-d! But even Moses delegated and used teamwork! He had Aaron to help him speak, and countless wise people to help him judge.

When you decide that it is time for you to act, there is no need to try to do everything by yourself. You need to be a part of a team with a clear set of responsibilities, goals, and accountability. Find a pro-Israel group to get involved with where you can make a positive difference.

Continued on Page 5

SUPER SUNDAY...A SUPER SUCCESS

This photo, showing conscientious community volunteer Mike Samuels on the phone for the 25th Annual Jewish Federation of Delaware Super Sunday phone-a-thon at the Bernard and Ruth Siegel Jewish Community Center, captures the spirit that makes this campaign kick-off event so successful. More than 80 volunteers contributed their time, talent and energy during the December 12th phone-a-thon and three follow-up Super Week evening phoning sessions to raise over \$340,000 for the 2005 Federation Annual Campaign.

Super Sunday Co-Chairs Felisha Alderson, Dorothy Bobman and Debra Kimless-Garber are thrilled with the tally – up by more than \$50,000 over last year's event! This talented trio, working in partnership with Federation Campaign professionals, Lauren Schultz, Super Sunday staff coordinator and Ruth Rosenberg, JFD Campaign direc-



tor, were pleased to recognize the special efforts of volunteer Greg Millman, who won an I-Pod Mini for getting the most increases over prior year pledges. The Kristol Center for Jewish Life at the University of Delaware (Hillel) received the Spirit Award of

\$1000 for having the highest representation of agency volunteers making phone calls to friends and neighbors in support of the 2005 Annual Campaign.

Check out our full-page of Super Sunday photo coverage on Page 8!

INSIDE THE VOICE

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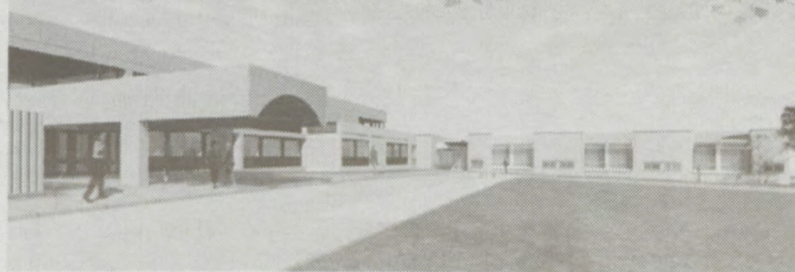
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FEDERATION FOCUS

We're small but we're great!



Sam Asher

By Samuel H. Asher
Executive President

Sid Stein, *THE JEWISH VOICE* advertising director, was talking on the phone the other day with one of his counterparts at another Jewish newspaper. This publication has a staff of 22, with a much larger circulation. Sid's colleague mentioned what a nice job we do with our newspaper and said: "Incidentally, how large is your staff?" When

Sid informed him that we have only two people producing the Voice they were flabbergasted. "Such a fine paper, with only two staff?"

This has happened a lot lately. A national leader recently came into town on business and met with our campaign chair, Bob Pincus and a couple of our senior staff to compare notes on national issues. He commented on the high degree of professionalism that he saw. He also took note of our winning the Sapir award from United Jewish Communities last month (for having one of the best campaigns in the country in 2003).

This national leader also took note of our Community Leadership Institute, as a model that has been very successful here and should be replicated in every community and was very impressed with the Voices in Israel program, which we spearheaded this past fall. You may remember that Barry Kayne, President of JFD, and Jack Zigon, JCRC and Planning Director for JFD, escorted Rick Jensen of WDEL, to Israel, where he broadcasted for a week live from Jerusalem. This was the highest level of Israel advocacy that we could have produced. Other communities have asked for copies of our on air programming to use as an example of how to make the Voices in Israel program work to its maximum.

We have a very full agenda for a Federation our size. We own and operate a Jewish newspaper, we have an active and

effective JCRC; we participate in Partnership 2000; we have a full service Endowment - JFF; we have a very successful Holocaust Education Committee; we own and operate the Weinberg Campus on Garden of Eden Road; we are running the largest Capital Campaign of any Federation our size, we coordinate with our agencies in many areas (including Jewish education planning), and help train leaders for the community. All of this happens because of many great volunteer leaders like Connie Sugarman and Arlene Simon, who are bringing our Women's Philanthropy Initiative to fruition.

This also happens because of a dedicated staff. One of these staff members has a favorite expression about JFD - "we may be small, but we are great!" How fitting that we are based in a state whose slogan is "Delaware—a small wonder".

Jack Zigon, the person who coined the phrase that has become our Federation's mantra, has done wonderful things for us during his 14 month tenure. His development of a cadre of writers to respond to issues raised in the News Journal has been nothing short of extraordinary. He has worked with agencies and synagogues on many programs. He has staffed allocations - always a labor of love. His crowning moment was in Israel this past fall when he made us look great as a part of the Voices in Israel program and brought great live "Hasbara" to Delaware.

We have all been working with the Israel

Project since Toni Young, Barry Kayne and I attended a workshop directed by Frank Luntz in the summer of 2002. This renowned pollster who helped shape the best message to put the right face on Israel and improve Israel Advocacy. The Israel Project is putting us on the right track with media and shaping the right messages for Israel. Jack has used this information to respond to the local media since his arrival in the summer of 2003.

Israel Project has taken notice of Jack's skills and asked him to join their staff. Jack will assume his new post as Senior Advisor for Strategy and Media on January 15, 2005.

We are saddened by Jack's impending departure. He has been a great partner to those who have worked with him. He has elevated our entire operation with his considerable business and technical expertise.

Yet, we are also very proud that we have helped him to take his career as an advocate of and for Israel to the national level. Jack's writing skills, his passion for Israel and his expertise in dealing with the media will now have an even greater impact on Hasbara.

We know he will make the Israel Project ever greater as he works with this Washington-based agency to improve the image of Israel and advocate on its behalf.

Yasher Koach, to Jack and to all of us who work as Israel's advocates. A new year is dawning with renewed hope for peace in the region. May we go from strength to strength in 2005.

Out with the old - in with the new



Jennifer Young

By Jennifer Young
Director,
Jewish Fund for the Future
and Women's Philanthropy

While the celebration of the New Year on January 1st is not a Jewish holiday, in the world in which most of us live it is a day that we mark in some fashion. For some people it may mean a party, for others it may sim-

ply be the time to switch to a new calendar. In either case, most of us note the passage of another year and the beginning of a new one.

We make resolutions for the new year. We vow to exercise more, eat less and be nicer to neighbors. We may pledge to be a better spouse or child, to criticize less and to volunteer more. We consider the projects that we did not get to last year and promise to get to them during the coming year.

While the momentum of the new year is still with us, consider examining estate and financial plans. Have you been putting off completing a will? Have circumstances changed since you drafted your will? Consider the following life cycle events that may impact your estate planning: marriages, births, divorce, and deaths. Consider whether you have acquired or disposed of assets, purchased or sold real estate and whether assets have increased (or decreased) in value.

Do you have grown children who no longer require your financial assistance? Have the needs of any named beneficiaries changed? Have the circumstances of or your relationships with people named as guardians, trustees or executors changed?

Lastly, have you made provisions for charitable gifts in your estate plan? Consider including a gift to the Jewish Fund

for the Future, the Jewish Federation of Delaware, a Jewish community agency or your synagogue in your will. On May 24, 2005 the Jewish Fund for the Future will hold its first Endowment Book of Life event. THE BOOK OF LIFE IS A PROMISE, a record of individual members of the community who plan to endow its future. The community members choosing to pledge their support sign The Book of Life and have the

opportunity to write about their history and hopes for the community. The event will honor donors who have made endowment provisions during their lifetime and donors that intend to make a planned giving commitment to the Jewish Federation.

For more information about planned giving, please contact me by phone at 302-427-2100 ext. 19 or by email at jennifer.young@shalomdel.org.

Scholarships Available



Scholarships are available for Israel experience and leadership development, please contact Gina at 302-427-2100 x 20 for more information about the Jerusalem Study Fund and other opportunities.

Save the Date

**Jewish Federation of Delaware Announces
Summer 2005 Family Mission to Israel
July 24 to August 3, 2005**

Next summer, give your family the gift of a lifetime — the ultimate Israel experience. Enjoy action and adventure. See history come alive. Feel the warmth of community and build lasting connections. Share the legacy of Jewish values that unite all Jewish people — and have fun doing it - together!

If you are interested, call Ruth Rosenberg, JFD Campaign Director at (302) 427-2100 ext. or e-mail at ruth.rosenberg@shalomdel.org.

JFD seeks Jewish community relations and community planning director

The successful candidate for this full-time position will coordinate all aspects of community relations as served by the JCRC. Primary responsibilities include Israel advocacy, Holocaust education and monitoring local, state and national issues of interest to the Jewish community. He/she will also assist the Executive Vice President in staffing the planning and allocations process. Applicants should be self-starters with strong interpersonal, written and oral communication skills. A passion for public policy issues is desirable. Three-five year's relevant experience is required. Applicants with MPA, MSW or MBA degrees are preferred. Please e-mail or fax resumes to sam.asher@shalomdel.org or 302-427-2438.

EDITORIALS AND OPINIONS

One People - Two New Years

G-d must really like the Jewish people to have blessed them with two unique opportunities for new beginnings. At Rosh Hashanah, the head of the year according to the Hebrew calendar, we take stock of ourselves, strengthen relationships with friends and loved ones and pledge our commitment to lead healthier, richer and more fulfilling lives.

For those of us who fail, despite our very best intentions, to fulfill all the heartfelt resolutions made in the fall, the dawning of a secular new year affords us a second chance to honor our commitments to ourselves and others. With little more than a week left on the December, 2004 calendar, I offer these personal resolutions for 2005:

☆ Bring a greater sense of *shalom bayit* to my home and family.

☆ Cherish my existing circle of friends and befriend others who are alone or lonely.

☆ Create more time in my life to study Torah and enhance my knowledge of Jewish culture and traditions.

☆ Live my faith more fully by giving more *tzedakah* and doing more *mitzvot*.

☆ Fulfill my role as a *shomer adamah* (guardian of the earth) by strengthening my

commitment to ecology and the ethical treatment of animals.

☆ Advocate strongly on behalf of Israel.

☆ Show solidarity with my Israeli brothers and sisters by participating in an upcoming mission sponsored by the Jewish Federation of Delaware or other Jewish organization.

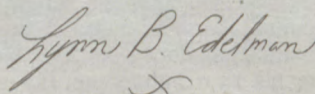
☆ Monitor the media for stories and opinion pieces about Jewish issues and concerns.

☆ Speak out loudly and strongly against anti-Semitism, racism and human rights violations.

☆ Appreciate more fully the many personal freedoms that I enjoy and help others to set themselves free from the bonds of oppression and bigotry.

May the year ahead be a healthy, happy and peaceful one for all of us.

B' Shalom,

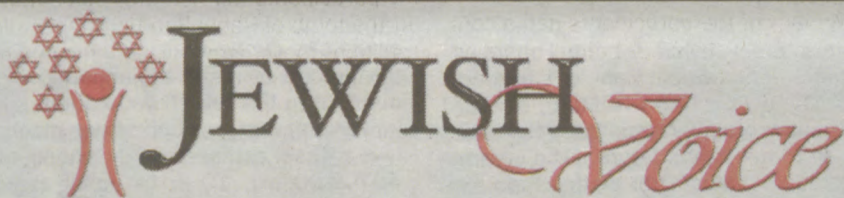


Lynn B. Edelman
Editor

Attention Snowbirds

Don't miss a single edition of the Jewish Voice while you are away for the winter.

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with your vacation address



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E-Mail: lynn.edelman@shalomdel.org



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for all articles, advertisements and news for The Jewish Voice

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e-mail: lynn.edelman@shalomdel.org

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

ACLU - Proud of involvement with Dobrich Family

To the Editor:

We were very pleased to see the Voice give front page coverage to our community's efforts to support Mona Dobrich and her family in the face of intolerance and violation of her family's Constitutional rights. We think it is important, however, that our community also be aware of the role played by ACLU Delaware. It was our executive director, Drew Fennell, who accompanied Mrs. Dobrich to the frighteningly hostile school board meetings at which her concerns were discussed. It was ACLU Delaware that helped secure her legal assistance. It was ACLU Delaware that consulted with the Indian River School Board's counsel in

encouraging the adoption of new policies on religion in the public schools that, we hope, will go a long way to eliminate the problems that Mona Dobrich faced.

ACLU Delaware is proud of its continuing work in support of civil liberties - including the adoption of HB 400, the law eliminating Saturday primary elections - that are of deep importance to Delaware's Jewish community (and, indeed, all religious communities). We look forward to continuing that cooperation in the future.

Sincerely,

Phyllis Levitt, President
Lawrence A. Hamermesh,
Past President

This Week in Jewish History



Celebrate 350
Jewish Life in America
1654 - 2004

DECEMBER 20, 1911

Hortense Calisher, author of memoirs, short stories, and more than ten novels including, *False Entry*, (1961) and, *Sunday Jews* (2002), was born on December 20, 1911.

DECEMBER 21, 1935

Hundreds of events around the world marked the 75th birthday of Henrietta Szold, founder of Hadassah, the Women's Zionist Organization of America, on December 21, 1935.

DECEMBER 21, 1919

Emma Goldman, along with 248 other radical "aliens," was deported to the Soviet Union on December 21, 1919 under the provisions of the 1918 Alien Act.

DECEMBER 22, 1952

"Ding Dong School," an early and influential television program for preschoolers, debuted nationally on December 22, 1952.

DECEMBER 23, 1947

Frances Stern, who founded the world's first "food clinic," which served as a model for many nutrition clinics in the U.S. and abroad, died on December 23, 1947.

DECEMBER 25, 1863

Regina Margareten, born on December 25, 1863, was hailed as the "matriarch of the kosher food industry."

DECEMBER 26, 1907

The largest rent strike New York City had ever seen began on December 26, 1907 and helped lead to the eventual establishment of rent control in New York.

"This Week in History" is brought to you by the Jewish Women's Archive. More information about each of the events described below can be found on JWA's website at http://www.jwa.org/this_week/week52.html

PARSHA PLACE

Week of December 25

Va-y'chi

Genesis 47:28-50:26

For G-d's Sake, Be nice!

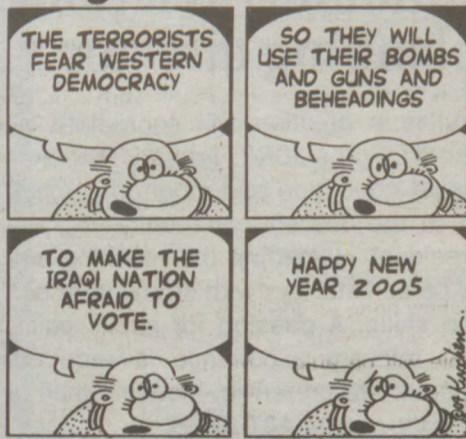
By Nesanel Safran

People tend to assume that the way we should treat others somehow depends on how they treat us. If someone is kind to us, we'll be kind back. If they're not kind, it's okay to get even, and give them back a taste of their own medicine. But we learn from the example of Joseph in this week's Torah portion that there can be another way. Joseph's brothers had treated him very unkindly earlier in life. They even kidnapped him, and sold him into slavery. Years later the brothers meet up once again in Egypt. By now, Joseph has become a powerful prince, and could easily take whatever revenge on his brothers that he pleases. Yet he chooses to treat them with the greatest kindness and respect. What was Joseph's secret? He understood that God wants us to treat others properly, regardless of how they treat us. He knew that God watches over and guides everything that happens, and ultimately will give each person whatever he deserves as a consequence to his actions. We need only be concerned about "keeping our side of the street clean," by treating others the way we know is right.

Read more about the weekly Torah portion on www.aish.com.

Dry Bones

NOT A SNEER CAMPAIGN... IT'S A FEAR CAMPAIGN!



SHABBAT Candle Lighting

DECEMBER 31ST
- 4:30 PM

JANUARY 7TH -
4:35 PM

EDITORIALS AND OPINIONS

New holiday in the Israeli calendar?

By Carl Alpert

Last year Chanukah and Christmas overlapped, and it was relatively easy to justify the merry holiday spirit which permeated Israel. This year, however, the two holidays are separated by a two week interval, and the observance of the Christian fete is more conspicuous than ever. With the passage of years it has become more and more obvious that not only local Christians observe the holiday here. Christmas is finding a fixed place in the schedules of many Jewish Israelis as well.

The point is made that the celebration has nothing to do with Christianity or any other religion. Rather, the day is seen as an international holiday, secular in nature, as Thanksgiving is regarded in America. If Buddhists can mark it in Hong Kong, and Hindus wherever they are located, why not Jews in Israel? Impetus to this characterization is given by the Russian immigrants who brought the tradition with them from the former Soviet Union where Christmas was a purely secular holiday.

Holiday symbols like Santa Claus and decorations for trees have accompanied the observance here. Appropriate greeting cards are available almost everywhere. We have seen a card showing angels hovering over a Christmas tree and bearing the traditional Sephardi good luck symbol, the Hamsa, fingers of a hand. In almost every major town in Israel plastic trees and Santa figures are openly offered for sale and are used to decorate some stores and restaurants. The spirit can not be missed. In cities like Jerusalem there are about 14,000 resident Christians, most of them Arabs. To this figure should be added church personalities representing the various denominations as well as members of the international press and the many foreign workers who openly celebrate the day.

In Tel Aviv, where most of the foreign diplomatic missions are located, the commercial appeal of the holiday is obvious. Restaurants advertise special Christmas dinners, and often add "Happy Chanukah" as a footnote. Israel radio and television play occasional carols. One street salesman, clearly wearing a black kippah (yarmelke), justified his selling of tree decorations on the grounds that there was nothing religious

about them. Besides, he added, his customers could save the items to decorate their succahs next year.

Much of the religious aspects of the holiday are obvious in Bethlehem, where special church services are openly held. Since the beginning of the Intifada, however, overseas Christian participation has been reduced. Christian officials are also disturbed by the Muslim attempts to commercialize on the holiday.

Haifa has found its own solution by transforming conflict into co-existence. Thousands of Israelis, of all faiths, this year attended the mid-December "Holiday of Holidays" festival centered around Chanukah, Christmas and Ramadan. Held in the Arab section of the city, Wadi Nisnas, and stretched out over several weeks, the program, as reported in the press, consisted of concerts, street performances, exhibits by dozens of Jewish and Arab artists, children's workshops, poetry and literature events, and not least, public meetings at which co-existence was openly discussed.

The Jewish National Fund has found a way to enter into the spirit of the season. At this time of year it trims its forests and makes

the young trees available free to members of the diplomatic corps, foreign journalists and others who take them home and dress them up in traditional style.

The December 25 date is observed by the Roman Catholics and the various Protestant denominations. The Greek Orthodox, of whom there are large numbers in the Middle East, mark their Christmas early in January. Prolonging the holiday spirit is the fact that New Year's eve, known here as Sylvester (as in many European countries), is widely recognized and marked without any religious connotations. Aside from the fact that it marks the beginning of a new civil year, are many Christians aware that it also marks the day of the circumcision of Jesus?

Last year Jerusalem mayor Uri Lupolianski, himself strictly Orthodox, was criticized in Jewish religious circles when he sponsored a municipal reception for all citizens on the first day of the civil year.

But back to the day ... Matt Nesvisky has suggested that Jewish observance of December 25 by Jews can be made kosher by taking the Christ out of Christmas and spelling it Krissmiss.

Love in Tel Aviv

By Nechemia Meyers

Participants in next summer's Maccabiah are being invited to remain in Israel afterwards in order to join a special program devoted to "Love in Tel Aviv." Organized by Oranim Educational Initiatives of Kfar Saba for the second year running, it brings together young Jews for a fun look at Israel and some informal matchmaking.

While Oranim Vice President Amnon Weigler doesn't deny that there is an element of "shadchanut" in his programs, their primary goal, he says, is "to give Jewish singles an opportunity to become acquainted with Israel and Israelis. The ties they establish here," he adds, "will remain with them for the rest of their lives. Moreover, some will eventually come to settle here."

This is also the approach of the Birthright scheme, which each year sends thousands of young people to Israel for their first-ever visit to the country. And many of them are handled by Oranim, which is responsible for more participants than any other sub-contractor working with the Birthright organizers. Last year, for example, Oranim took care of 30% of the participants in the Birthright program, 4,000 in summer 2004 alone.

Yet Weigler is particularly proud of the much smaller "Love in Tel Aviv" scheme, inaugurated in 2004. That year a total of 85 young men and women came from Australia, South Africa, the United States, Canada, Germany, Britain, Sweden, Turkey, France and Holland. Also participating in the group were 35 Israelis, of whom a large percentage were recently arrived olim from

English-speaking countries.

Weigler knows for certain of two long-term relationships that developed between participants in the program and believes there may be more. "In any case," he declares, "we have promised to cover the expenses of a honeymoon in Israel for any 'alumni' who tie the knot."

While many of the participants had a considerable interest in Israel before boarding the plane that brought them here, others came simply because they wanted to meet Jews of their own age. Weigler cites the case of a young woman from England who lives in a small town distant from any organized Jewish community, and this was her chance, as she saw it, to spend some time in a Jewish milieu. The same was true for a man from Sweden, where, outside Stockholm,

Jews are few and far between.

The schedule distributed by the "Love in Tel Aviv" organizers clearly hints that these isolated Jews may find not only Jewish companionship but, possibly, a Jewish marriage partner. In describing a visit that the group will be making to the Galilee, it is noted that the participants will visit (and some may pray at) the tomb of Rabbi Ben Uziel. According to tradition, the program adds, "those who do so will be blessed and find their love."

Weigler rejects the suggestion that his venture is just another Jewish marriage market scheme, of which, as Google will inform you, there are many hundreds for the ultra-Orthodox, the modern Orthodox and every other variety of Jews "But there is one big difference. Our ultimate aim," Weigler declares, "is to promote aliyah."

A New Year...A New Beginning

Continued from page 1

6. Nachshon

Do you remember in the story of Moses when the Hebrews were leaving Egypt they got to the Red Sea - and the Jews stopped? They were waiting for the sea to part before they made a move. They whined and complained to Moses and to God. But then a guy named Nachshon jumped into the water - and the Red Sea parted.

All the complaining that the Jews did at the Red Sea reminds me a bit of well meaning members of our community who send nasty notes to reporters about their coverage about Israel, without having first pitched to reporters facts and information about Israel that they needed in order to do their job well and efficiently. Most journalists are busy people, they don't always cover Israel, yet we expect them to be an expert on it when they write on it one day and Botswana the next. We need to get reporters the facts, visuals and insights they need BEFORE they do their stories about Israel. Work with local and national organizations to get the right information and fact sheets to your local media.

For Jews to get to safety, we need to be proactive. We must take a plunge - having faith and vision for a better future.

7. Accountability counts

Beware of "analysis paralysis." It is a terrible disease that cripples organizations with a thousand meetings and no results. I call it "death by a thousand paper cuts." In order for a team to succeed, every meeting and

task must have specific desired and measurable outcomes. We in Delaware have led the Israel Advocacy community nationwide in measuring the results of our efforts.

8. Hatikva

As you know, the Israeli national anthem is Hatikva. Hatikva means hope.

Though it may seem counterintuitive, in order to bring more support to Israel we need to show hope for the Palestinians. We need to show hope and efforts for a better life for Palestinian children who have suffered from schools and TV shows that incite hatred and teach them to idolize or become suicide bombers.

We need to show hope for a time when Palestinian soccer stadiums are named after successful Palestinian business leaders - and not terrorists.

We need to show hope that Palestinian will choose leaders who will use American and European aid to create more jobs and better healthcare - and not to make bombs that kill children or to line their pockets.

We need to show empathy for Palestinians and be honest about the fact that terrorists force Israel to do things to defend itself that does not make life easier for Palestinians. For example, we need to show hope for a time when there is no need for an anti-terrorism security fence and people will be able move freely for commerce, culture and cooperation.

You can invite people to call you a dreamer or naive. But unless you can help Americans imagine a situation where there

is cooperation in place of bloodshed, they will not be excited about our government and tax dollars going into efforts to make the dream of security, peace and prosperity a reality.

9. YOU can make a difference.

Today, many in the Jewish community still view anti-Semitism and anti-Israel images in the press as inevitable - like a tornado barreling down on our path. But the fact is that with good strategic communications, these problems can be reduced by significant levels.

Theodore Herzl said ... "If you wish it, it is not just a dream."

Fighting for Israel's image is the battle without bloodshed, in a real war where there has already been too much bloodshed and death.

People in Israel depend on us. Jews around the world depend on us.

And we depend on each other.

Together, we can use communications to make Israel and all Jews safer and more secure.

With Arafat gone, the Palestinians will

soon have a chance to choose a democratic leader who will end the terror, the culture of hate and reach out their hand in peace. I hope for their sake, and for the sake of Israel, that they will choose this kind of leader.

But whether the Palestinians choose a leader who will choose peace or not, it is up each of us to make sure that Israel and the Jewish people are secure.

10. With Hanukah past, celebrate its REAL meaning every day

We just celebrated Hanukah - a time when we remember the resilience of our people. But each day, as we support Israel and the Jewish people, we must remember that the important thing is not only the candles we light but **being a light unto the world that matters.**

We know that Israel, like America, can make mistakes. But each and every day Israel is a diverse democracy where Christians, Moslems and Jews all have freedoms freedom of religion, speech, press and the right to vote. Each day Israel is working for peace, security and a better life for both Israelis AND Palestinians.



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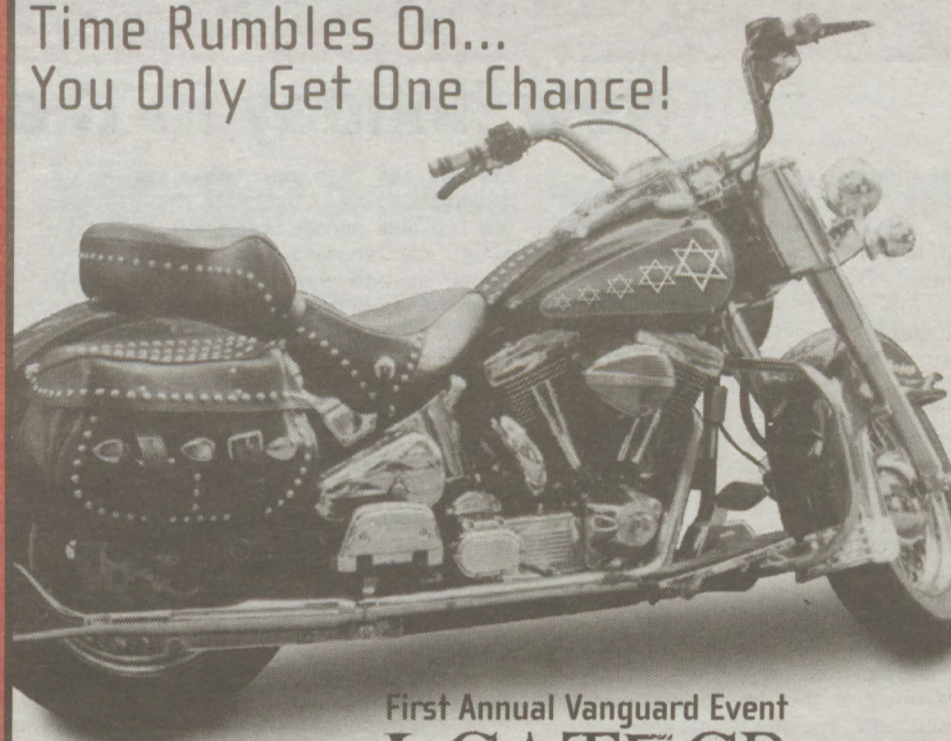
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January 7, 2005

Deadline December 30, 2004

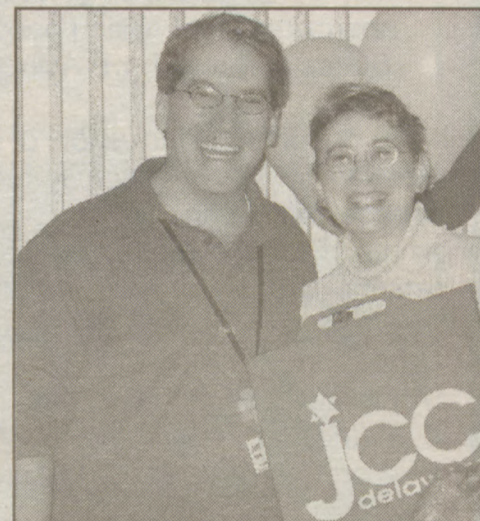
SUPER SUNDAY!!!



CARPER GETS RESULTS! 2005 Federation Annual Campaign Chairpersons Bob Pincus and Suzanne Grant watch a true pro take to the phones. Senator Tom Carper can always be counted upon to get a pledge from a loyal constituent.

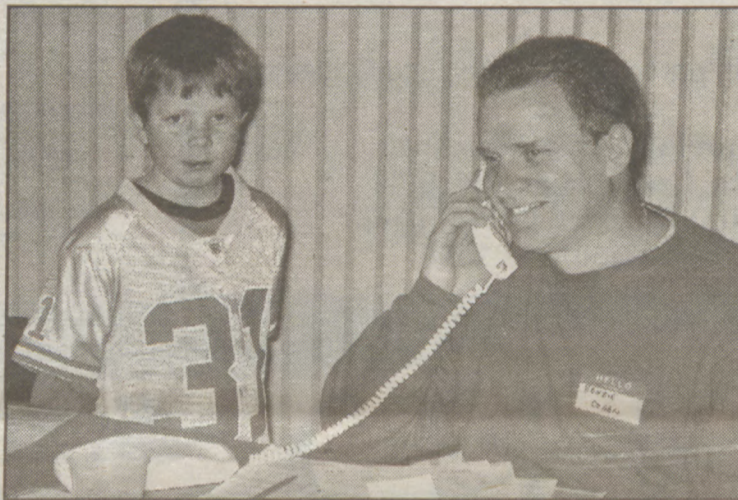
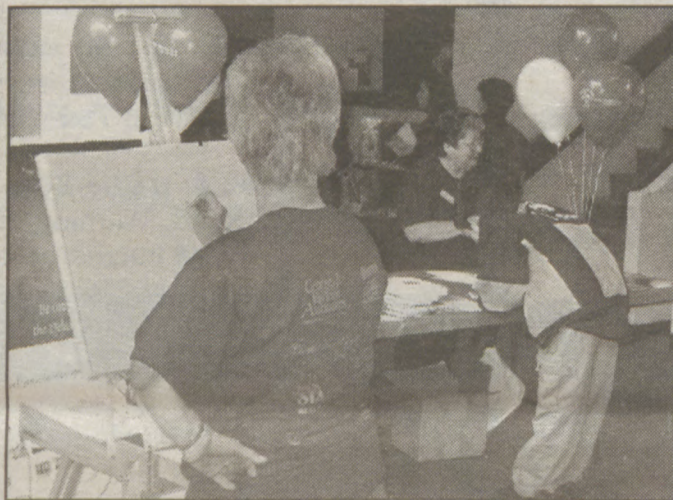


BREAKING IN THE NEW GUY. 2005 Super Sunday Co-Chairs Felisha Alderson, Dorothy Bobman and Debra Kimless-Garber motivate Rabbi Michael Beals, spiritual leader of Congregation Beth Shalom in Wilmington. Rabbi Beals came to the Wilmington-area late last summer from California.



THE BEST SEAT IN THE HOUSE... Is the one protected by a bright-red "tush cushion". Modeling the 2005 model is Jeff Metz, executive vice president of the Bernard and Ruth Siegel Jewish Community Center (JCC) and Susan Detwiler, executive director of the Kristol Center for Jewish Life at the University of Delaware.

THE POWER OF THE PENCIL. Delaware artist Reva Brown spent several hours documenting the action on her sketchpad.



FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION. Benjie Cohen teaches son, Ari the fine art of soliciting pledges.



AN OFFICER AND A GENTLEWOMAN. Long-time Super Sunday volunteer Linda Sigman (left) and Ariel Kayne, a 2nd Lieutenant in the United States Air Force, help score a win for the 2005 campaign. Kayne, the son of Federation President Barry S. Kayne and his wife, Reiko, will begin flight school in Texas next year.



ONE ON ONE WITH CASTLE. Congressman Mike Castle and Israel Initiatives Chair Toni Young catch up during the phone-a-thon. Each year, the Congressman strides to the microphone to motivate Super Sunday volunteers.



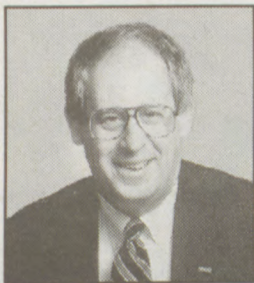
KID POWER. Teenagers Jordan Richman, Stephanie Saran and Talia Tiffany demonstrate the power of youthful enthusiasm in closing Super Sunday pledge cards.



HILLEL SHOWS ITS SPIRIT. Barry Shinker and Brian Rubin, members of the Kristol Center for Jewish Life at the University of Delaware (Hillel), scored a number of increases during their time on the phones. Motivated volunteers like these were the reason that Hillel won the 2005 Spirit Award.

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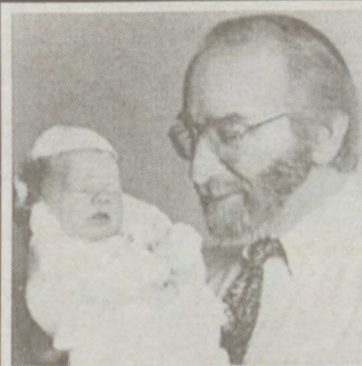
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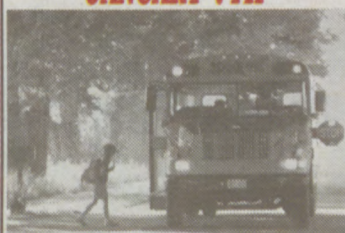
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| JULY 31-AUGUST 12 | SESSION 4 | \$465 | \$490 |
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| | | \$605 | \$630 |
| TEEN ADVENTURE | | | |
| JUNE 19-24 | SESSION A | \$950 | \$1000 |
| JULY 2-8 | SESSION B | \$650 | \$700 |
| JULY 10-15 | SESSION C | \$950 | \$1000 |
| JULY 17-22 | SESSION D | \$700 | \$750 |
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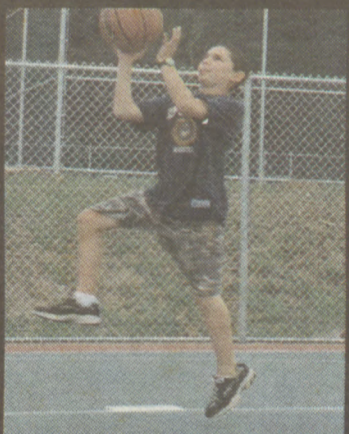
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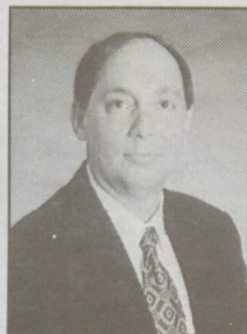
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INSIDE DELAWARE

U.N. may mark concentration camp liberation

By Rachel Pomerance, JTA

With Kofi Annan's backing, the United Nations appears poised to host its first commemorative session on the Holocaust.

The U.N. secretary-general is sending letters to all member states asking for their support for a special emergency session on Jan. 24 in honor of the 60th anniversary of the liberation of the Nazi concentration camps.

A majority of member states, or at least 96, must answer with a letter of support for the event to take place.

Many observers expect it to happen.

"It's a no-cost opportunity," said Felice Gaer, director of the Jacob Blaustein Institute for Human Rights at the American Jewish Committee.

Countries will be able to show their opposition to genocide without having to look for balancing language on other issues, she explained.

The move comes amid a major lobbying effort led by the United States, with the backing of B'nai B'rith International.

"We believe that it is important that the United Nations, an organization that rose out of the ashes of World War II and the Holocaust, mark this important occasion in a manner fitting its historical significance," the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, John Danforth, wrote in a Dec. 10 letter to Annan.

Annan has lent his own outspoken support for a commemoration of the liberation.



Dachau survivors cheer the arrival of American liberators on April 29, 1945.

Credit: USHMM, courtesy of National Archives

Six months ago, the United Nations hosted its first daylong conference to address growing worldwide anti-Semitism. Annan introduced the event and spoke about the concentration camp anniversary.

"My friends, next January it will be 60 years since the first of the death camps were liberated by advancing Soviet forces. There could be no more fitting time for member states to take

action on the necessity of combating anti-Semitism in all its forms," Annan said.

He referred to a recent resolution adopted by the Commission on Human Rights to protect Muslims and Arabs, asking, "Are not Jews entitled to the same degree of concern and protection?"

The special session would address the liberation anniversary with speeches. At the same

time, a Holocaust exhibit, sponsored by Israel, is slated to open in U.N. halls on Jan. 24 and will last through early March.

Another exhibit of photographs taken by youth who have visited camps will be mounted at the United Nations next month by the International Auschwitz Committee.

Along with Danforth's letter last week came appeals from Canada, the 25 member states of the European Union, Australia, New Zealand and Israel.

Last Monday, Rep. Tom Lantos (D-Calif.), the only Holocaust survivor in the U.S. Congress, met with Annan to press for the session.

Lantos and B'nai B'rith said Arab countries privately had opposed the session. Several calls seeking response from Arab U.N. delegations were unsuccessful.

Lantos cosponsored a letter with Rep. Christopher Smith (R-N.J.) in the U.S. House of Representatives calling on Annan to hold a special session on the occasion.

A similar letter in the Senate was sponsored by Sens. George Voinovich (R-Ohio) and Christopher Dodd (D-Ct.). Both were sent to Annan.

For its part, the American Jewish Committee is not lobbying yet on the issue, thinking it won't be necessary to ask countries for their support, Gaer said.

B'nai B'rith is a bit more tentative.

"We at B'nai Brith are not taking any country for granted," said Amy Goldstein, the group's director of U.N. affairs.

Krakow Jews mark 700 years

By Carolyn Slutsky, JTA

There's much more to Krakow's Jewish history than is depicted in Holocaust films.

Indeed, when the city's Tempel Synagogue was being built between 1860 and 1862, Jewish life already had been thriving here for over 550 years.

A ceremony and concert this week in the synagogue, which was restored in 2000, marked the 700th anniversary of Jewish life in Krakow.

The event drew local and national dignitaries who delivered speeches on the historical and cultural significance of Jewish life in Krakow.

"Jews helped build this town," said Mayor Jacek Majchrowski. "They were doctors, teachers, and today with Jews and Poles working together we will ensure that the Holocaust will never happen in this world again."

The exact year of the anniversary was determined by the first mention of Jewish street names in the city's archival records in 1304.

Krakow's Jewish district used to be in the center of town near the main market square, near what are today Saint Anne Street and the main buildings of Jagiellonian University.

In 1495, Jews were effectively expelled from that area and moved to Kazimierz, which was separated from the rest of Krakow by the Wisla River.

Jewish life flourished for hundreds of years in Kazimierz and in the nearby district of Podgorze, until the Nazis established a ghetto in Podgorze in 1940.

Jews from all over the city were forced to give up their homes and move into the ghetto. It was liquidated in March 1943, and those who had survived the harsh ghetto life were marched to the nearby Plaszow labor camp, or deported to the Belzec death camp in eastern Poland.

Kazimierz lay fallow for some 50 years, a neighborhood of low-income housing and high crime. After the fall of Communism in 1989 and the success of Stephen Spielberg's Holocaust film, "Schindler's List," in 1993, Kazimierz was revitalized: Synagogues were restored and Jewish-style restaurants opened.

Today, the area is one of the largest tourist sites in Poland, attracting Jewish and non-

Jewish visitors from all over the world to glimpse the centuries-old history.

Poland's new chief rabbi, Michael Schudrich, addressed this week's gathering.

"We thank God for the past 700 years, and for the next," he said. Schudrich followed his remarks with a Hebrew prayer.

Franciszek Cardinal Macharski, archbishop of Krakow and head of the province of Malopolska, also attended and spoke. The ceremony was followed by a concert showcasing Jewish cultural life, both old and new.

The Klezmer band Kroke — Yiddish for Krakow — performed new interpretations of Klezmer classics.

They were followed by Leopold Kozlowski, known as the last Klezmer of Galicia, who conducted a group of musicians and vocalists singing in Polish and in Yiddish. Their show energized the audience of Holocaust survivors from Krakow and elsewhere in Poland, other local Krakowians and young Jews.

At a reception following the concert, the complicated state of Jewish life in Poland today was on the minds of many guests.

Daniel Bertram survived the war in the Soviet state of Georgia, and made his way back to his hometown of Krakow after the war ended.

"When I returned my whole family was gone, 18 people murdered," he said. Bertram found his apartment had been taken over, and when he tried to get a passport out of Poland he was denied.

Today Bertram remains in Krakow, near where his great-grandfather lived, and prays at the Orthodox Remuh synagogue. Though the war changed everything, Krakow is still his home, he said.

"I'm a native," he said, "I come from an old Krakow family."

It's difficult to count the number of Jews in Poland today because of the displacement of Jews during World War II and the subsequent Communist regime, but Schudrich estimated the country that was once home to 3.5 million Jews now has upward of 20,000. That number is growing, he said.

Ola Wilczura, head of the Krakow branch of the Polish Union of Jewish Students, was skeptical about the future of Jewish life in Poland. "Most Krakowian Jews go abroad to Israel or the U.S.," she said.



A concert is held during the celebration of Tempel Synagogue's 700th anniversary in Krakow, Poland, on Dec. 8, 2004.

Credit: Carolyn Slutsky/JTA

Most Poles with Jewish roots come from intermarried families — a grandmother was hidden or converted, for example, or a father negated his Judaism during the Communist era.

For these Poles, returning to Judaism is a complex process. They can be intimidated by the Orthodoxy of the official Jewish community in Poland, and many seek alternatives that will allow them to embrace their Jewish roots

without a total shift in character.

Wilczura noted that in Krakow, "the community doesn't have programs for young people that will accept Polish and Jewish roots. We need education, and it's not so easy."

In the midst of the celebration, Wilczura considered the present difficulties in Polish Jewish life. Asked if there would be an 800th anniversary of Jewish life in Krakow, she shook her head uncertainly.



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INSIDE DELAWARE

AEA second graders experience Pilgrim life firsthand

By Judi Feinson
Special to the Jewish Voice

The children dipped their quills into homemade black walnut ink and drew pictures. Then they played *hide-the-thimble* and handcrafted *poppets* or dolls. Finally, they learned to do counted cross-stitch and danced an English folk dance. These are just a few of the activities, common to Pilgrim or Colonial children in the 17th and 18th centuries, that were performed last month by the second grade students in the classroom of Nancy Brock, teacher at Albert Einstein Academy.

With the support of a grant from MBNA, Nancy Brock took her class on a month-long journey studying, observing and reenacting the lives of Pilgrim children. The unit began with the reading of stories about Pilgrim children, followed by a classroom activity comparing the typical

jobs and activities performed by children years ago with those done today. On October 27th the class took a field trip to Colonial Pennsylvania Plantation, a restored and working 18th Century plantation in Ridley Park, Pennsylvania, where they dipped candles, sawed logs with a two-person hand saw, and drew water from a well. While at the well, second-grader Jordan Taub remarked, "Whoa! There's holes in the bucket! So how do they keep the water in?" The well bucket was designed with holes to allow it to be immersed in the water as it is lowered. As it is immersed, water forces down an attached flap of leather which creates a barrier to keep the water in the bucket.

Nancy Brock stated, "I believe providing the children with hands-on experiences is the best way for children to learn how people lived centuries ago. The generosity of MBNA helped to make this learning experience a reality."

Jenny Brown, an international folk dance instructor visited the classroom multiple times to teach the children traditional English Country Dances popular among Pilgrim children, and the Indian Snake Dance. Interim Head of School Mike Brassloff noted, "Each time I visited the classroom this past month, I was energized to see the children enthusiastically participating in many creative Pilgrim-related projects. These activities have helped them to gain a richer understanding of the how the Pilgrims lived."

Albert Einstein Academy is the Jewish Day School in the Brandywine Valley serving students from Pre-Kindergarten through 6th grade in New Castle County, Delaware and Chester and Delaware Counties, Pennsylvania. Albert Einstein Academy is accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and



Hannah Longwill, Rachel Bailey, Emily Adelman busy creating their poppets.

Schools, and is a constituent of the Jewish Federation of Delaware. For more information about Albert

Einstein Academy contact Michael Brassloff, Interim Head of School, at 478-5026.

Beth Shalom sponsors winter film series at Theatre N

The Rabbi Jacob Kraft Educational Foundation of Congregation Beth Shalom presents its inaugural "Winter Film Series" at Theatre N in Wilmington. "This series of Sunday flicks of Jewish interest is indicative of the types of quality educational, informative, and entertaining programming for the entire community made possible by Foundation fund-

ing," said synagogue President Jeffrey Lewis.

On Sunday, January 2 at 7:00 PM is the French comedy "G-d is Great, I'm Not" starring Audrey Tautou ("Amelie") as a non-Jew who makes her Jewish love become more observant.

On Sunday, January 9 at 7:00 PM "The Holy Land" will be shown. This is a mystery with dark political

and criminal undercurrents that takes a look at the seamier side of Israeli life.

The final show will be Sunday, January 23 at 8:00 PM. "Gloomy Sunday" is a romantic melodrama set in pre-World War II Budapest that features an agreed upon love triangle and international intrigue as the Nazis occupy Hungary.

As the series is a fundraiser for

Congregation Beth Shalom, donations are \$11.00 per ticket or \$40.00 for the entire series. Advance tickets are available for purchase by credit card by calling 302 571 4699 or online at www.theatren.org. Tickets can be purchased at the theater starting one hour before each show.

Validated parking is available in the City Center garage on 11th

Street between West and Tatnall Streets. Bring in your parking ticket and we'll validate it so it's \$1.00 to park. Parking meters are free all weekend too!

A discussion will follow each film and refreshments will be available. Keep your ticket stub for your tax deduction. For further information call Beth Shalom at 302 654 4462. See you at the movies!

Beth Shalom hosts musical holiday tribute



On the 5th night of the Festival of Lights, Sunday evening Dec. 12, Congregation Beth Shalom hosted Hazzan Michael Horwitz's Harmonious Hanukkah featuring various choirs including the Bohemia Manor High School Golden Eagle Chorus of Cheasapeake City, MD along with the Beth Shalom Adult Choir and students from AEA and the Congregation Beth Shalom/Adas Kodesh Shel Emeth community school. Over 250 people enjoyed the entertainment led by Hazzan Horwitz and his special guests. A delicious Hanukkah dinner with lots and lots of latkes was served as well.

Melton School visits museum exhibit



Toni Young (right), pioneer graduate of the Florence Melton Adult Mini-School and Guest Curator for the Delaware Historical Society's exhibit, *Half a Chance*, led students (and future students) of the Melton School on a visit to the museum during an afternoon break from Super Sunday. Pictured are Janet Rice, Sue Cytron, Stuart Nemser, Steve Klein and Lelaine Nemser.



Making Chanukah Choopla at JCC

Crowds kept the Bernard and Ruth Siegel Jewish Community Center filled for most of the day on December 5th for the 30th annual Chanukah Choopla. Food, crafts and family fun delighted all in attendance.

Ethan Adrus's rabbi puppet gives friend Alex Schwartz a friendly pop on the head. Alex's sister, Dara finds the horseplay hysterical.

Noted biblical scholar to teach at Delaware Gratz

Bring a Bible and an open mind to Delaware Gratz Hebrew High School on Sundays for a second semester class entitled "Seventy Faces: The Kaleidoscope of Torah". Gratz Scholar-in-Residence Tamar Jacobowitz, highly regarded Biblical scholar from the University of Pennsylvania will teach this course during Gratz's second

semester, which begins on Sunday, January 9th.

Professor Jacobowitz will also teach a class for "adults only" on Sunday, February 13, 12:30 -1:15 pm and Sunday, March 13, 10:00 am to 10:45 am.

For additional information or to register, please call Principal Marlene Milunsky at 478-8100.

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For more information regarding Bequests or Endowments, please visit www.shalomdelaware.org or call Jennifer Young at (302) 427-2100 x 19. If you have provided for the community, please let us know, a recognition event is planned to honor all endowment donors on May 24, 2005.

Israel 2005

Contact Jennifer at (302)427-2100 x 19 for more information

Young adults ages 19-25 are encouraged to apply for this exciting program to work as a counselor in our sister community of Arad/Tamar. The Jewish Federation of Delaware and the Partnership 2000 allocation will cover **all expenses in Israel** - ground transportation, orientation, room and board, touring, and a portion of the airfare. The counselors each pay \$250 towards the airfare. Last summer 8 counselors from our NJ/DE partnership participated in the program.

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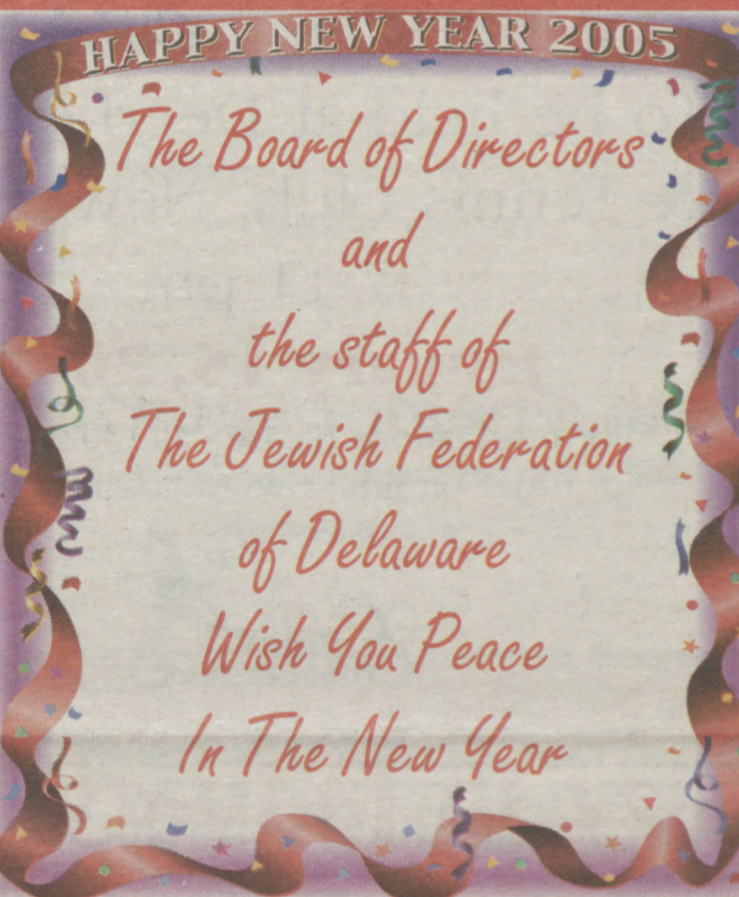
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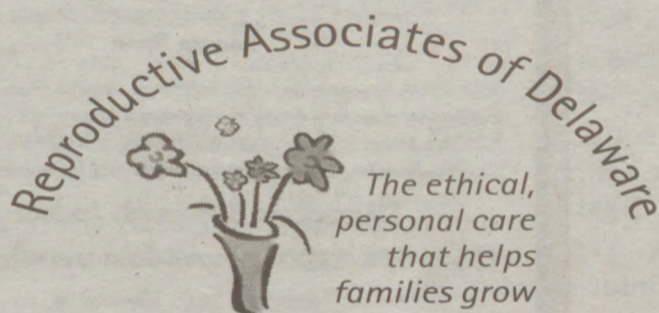
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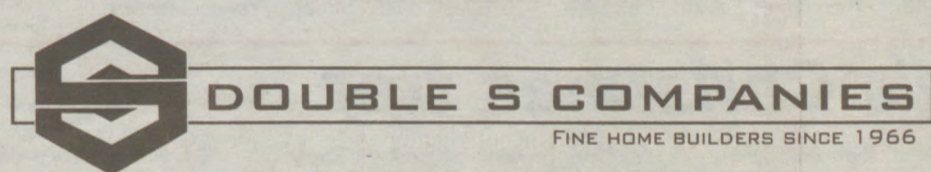
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12/04

MILESTONES

In Memoriam

BASS

S. Woody Bass, 52, of Wilmington, died December 9th. At the time of his death, he was a chemistry teacher at Brandywine High School. Students there derived the benefit of his 20 years experience as a research chemist.

He was a man of many interests: an Eagle Scout, a clarinetist with the First State Symphonic Band, a competitive tennis and bridge player.

Survivors include his wife, Nancy Selzer; daughter, Sara; son, Marc; parents, Leonil and Ouida Bass; sisters, Beth Holaris and Lydia Bass and brother-in-law, David Holaris.

A memorial service was held on December 13th at Congregation Beth Emeth in Wilmington. Contributions in his memory would be appreciated to Mazon, c/o Congregation Beth Emeth, 300 West Lea Blvd., Wilmington, DE 19802.

BELL

Shaun Michael Bell, 27, of Henderson, NV died December 9th

after a courageous 4 year struggle with cancer. Mr. Bell was a Wilmington native who grew up in Woodbury, NJ.

Survivors include his parents, Barbara and Howard A. Bell, Jr. of Henderson, NV; grandmother, Marian Newstadt Rosenblatt of Henderson, NV; grandfather, Howard A. Bell, Sr. of Hillsboro, OR; aunts and uncles, Julie and James Bell of Hillsboro, OR and Janice and Richard Johnson of Granada Hills, CA; and cousin, Sidney Johnson of Granda Hills. He was predeceased by his grandfather, Leonard H. Rosenblatt and his grandmother, Betty Bell.

Graveside services were held on December 12th in the Jewish Community Cemetery on Foulk Road in Wilmington.

The family would appreciate memorial contributions to Dream Foundation, 621 Chapala Street, Santa Barbara, CA 93101.

HAACK

Robin N. Haack, 51, of Hockessin, died at home on December 19th. She

was a registered dietician at Fresenius USA, working with renal patients.

Her community involvement included service as a co-president of the Sisterhood of Congregation Beth Emeth in Wilmington and as treasurer of the A.I. duPont High School Band Boosters.

She is survived by her husband of 23 years, David J. Haack; her son, Steven; her daughter, Hilary; parents, Florence and Irv Seidenstadt; and her brother, Barry.

Funeral services were held on December 21st at Congregation Beth Emeth with interment in the Jewish Community Cemetery on Foulk Road.

Mrs. Haack's family would appreciate contributions in her memory to either the American Cancer Society, 92 Reads Way, New Castle, DE 19720 or to Compassionate Care Hospice, 5610 Kirkwood Highway, Wilmington, DE 19808.

KURMAN

Lillian Kurman passed away on December 14th. The former Lillian

Taub, she was the beloved wife of the late Max M. Kurman; loving mother to Howard Kurman and Jerome A. Kurman of Baltimore, MD and mother-in-law to Roz and Gail Kurman; sister of Josephine Kessler of Wilmington and devoted grandmother of Michelle Kurman, Adrienne Kurman, Michael and Sheri Kurman and Jill Kurman.

Funeral services were held on December 16th in Baltimore, MD with interment in Beth El Memorial Park, Randallstown, MD.

TUROFF

Stanley Arnold Turoff, 67, of Ellenville, NY, died December 17th. He is survived by his sister, Eileen T. Conner of Fairthorne and special friend, Hannah Rosnel and her family of Ellenville.

Funeral services were held on December 21st at Congregation Erath Israel in Ellenville, NY.

The family requests that contributions in Mr. Turoff's memory be made to either the Jewish Federation of Delaware, 100 West 10th Street,

Suite 301, Wilmington, DE 19801; Kutz Home, 704 River Road, Wilmington, DE 19809 or Hillel, 47 West Delaware Avenue, Newark, DE 19711.

WIENNER

Jennifer Leigh Wiener, 23, of Ballymeade, died December 12th. She earned a BA with Honors from the University of Delaware and had intended to pursue a career as a pharmacist.

She will be missed by her mother, Andrea Kemper; her father, Marcus Wiener; brother, David Wiener; grandmother, Lillian Kemper; aunt, Merrill Yost; cousins, Kerry and Bryan Yost; aunt and uncle, Jill and Bobby Rosen; cousins, Joey, Debbie and Michael.

Graveside services were held on December 16th in the Jewish Community Cemetery on Foulk Road, Wilmington.

The family requests that contributions in her memory benefit breast cancer research.

Mrs. Steinberg's Christmas tree

By Rabbi Bob Alper

Question: Which Jewish holiday most closely parallels Christmas?

Answer: Not Chanukah.

Sure, Chanukah and Christmas have a few elements in common: both are winter solstice events, successors to the pagan rites of lighting bonfires in an effort to rekindle the increasingly absent sun (it works, by the way; on December 22, the days start to lengthen). Both make use of plenty of candles, or candle-shaped lightbulbs. Both involve gift exchanges, though Chanukah is a latecomer to this tradition.

But it's Passover, not Chanukah that offers the most similarities to Christmas. Passover: a holiday of special food, of remarkable smells, of family-centered traditions, of memories heaped upon memories. Passover is the Jewish homecoming, the ingathering, based on an historical and theological event upon which the religion was constructed.

Like Christmas.

Always an adaptable, creative people, Jews of the last two generations have invigorated little, rather unimportant Chanukah (it's not even mentioned in the Hebrew Bible) until it's become nearly competitive with cousin Christmas. What has always been a minor Jewish holiday has been injected with steroids.

And in the myth department, Jews have gone even one step further: while Christian children realize by age six or so (earlier, if they have a cynical older sibling) that Santa is a fable, many Jews actually go through their entire lives thinking that the so-called "miracle" of the oil lamp was an historical and theological event. (It wasn't. The story was simply a cute legend, added hundreds of years after the Maccabean revolt. Sorry if your fantasy has been crushed.)

For Jewish kids, especially Jewish kids like me in the early 1950s, December was a tough month, our feeble little holiday contrasting flimsily against our Christian friends' major joyfest. I even have a vague memory of making an advent wreath in one public school classroom. Every day for several weeks, each of us pulled off one paper ring, watching the

object grow smaller and smaller, till, at the very end, it would be CHRISTMAS! Hooray!! (Oh, except for you, Bobby.)

Back then our family rented a second floor flat on Luzon Avenue in Providence, RI, just across the street from the John Howland Elementary School. I was in the first grade, my sister in the third. The flat below was occupied by the landlord and landlady, Mr. and Mrs. Steinberg.

My mother was what we now call a "stay-at-home mom," only in the early fifties, she and her ilk were called housewives. Friendly and gregarious, she has always had a full social life and a huge number of friends. Except for Mrs. Steinberg. Mom and the landlady didn't hit it off very well, possibly because, from the day we moved in, the woman downstairs repeatedly slammed a broomstick into her ceiling every time my sister or I dared walk down our uncarpeted hallway wearing anything more than socks.

Some neighbor.

Within a few months, we moved to another home, but before we could depart, Mrs. Steinberg launched one more missile at our family.

Friday, December 22, 1950. Chanukah had ended, and Christmas was now right around the corner. School vacation began mid-day, soon after the traditional morning Christmas assembly. Hundreds of excited children bearing holiday artwork streamed through John Howland's doors, followed shortly afterward by their grateful teachers.

My mother had a weekly appointment at the beauty parlor every Friday afternoon. Hair and nails had to be just right, in preparation for the approaching Sabbath. Our teenage babysitter, also beginning vacation, was enlisted to watch us for the two hours. A typical gloomy New England winter day, we played indoors.

The boredom was broken when, shortly after my mother departed, an unexpected peal of the door chimes summoned the three of us down the stairs and into the front hallway. Through the glass, we could see our neighbor, Mrs. Steinberg, patiently awaiting. A benign half smile across her lips, she juggled a small box and...my heart began to beat

faster...a three foot tall, green... Christmas tree!

"A special treat for Margie and Bobby," she explained. Mrs. Steinberg worked as a teacher at an elementary school across town, and the small tree had decorated her room. Her own children were adults, no longer living at home, and, well, she knew how much the Alper children must want a Christmas tree. "And since this perfectly good tree would only have been thrown away, I thought you'd like to have it."

If MasterCards had been around then, they could have produced this ad: A desk-size Douglas fir Christmas tree: \$5.50. A small box of ornaments: \$2.75. The chance to wreak havoc with the religious identity of the children of your despised neighbor: Priceless.

We accepted the items with thanks and raced up the stairs. But rather than let us set up the tree and begin decorating it, the babysitter, a smart teen, insisted that we first receive parental permission. We dialed the beauty salon and caught my mother with wet hair and wet nails. "Guess what! We got a Christmas tree! We got a Christmas tree! Mrs. Steinberg gave it to us! We can keep it, right mommy? Just this year, OK? This once?"

Mom was non-committal on the phone while she furiously rummaged through her pocketbook in a frantic search for Chooz, the antacid gum she favored.

"Don't do anything yet. We'll talk about it when I get home." Mom had bought an hour's reprieve.

We waited impatiently, staring longingly at the naked tree and imagining how enchanting it would look, set on the coffee table in the center of our living room, adorned with decorations. It didn't even occur to us that there were no electric lights. We just wanted a Christmas tree.

During those same moments, as she sat under the sacred privacy of the salon's hair dryer, my mother began to picture what would occur later that evening at our synagogue when she, president of the Sisterhood, and my father, past-president of the Brotherhood, entered services with their children excitedly

blabbing the news about their lovely little Christmas tree.

She devised a plan.

A major commotion erupted when Mom returned, with the word "Pleeeeeeze" repeated with urgent frequency. Kids' body language appears similar when they want something really badly or when they require an immediate trip to the bathroom: a kind of low jumping, up and down, in place. And my sister and I were jumping. "Please? Can we keep it? Just this once?"

My mother seemed to be considering our request, then launched her counter-offensive. No question about it: she blindsided us with an absolutely perfect, even delicious, solution.

"It is a lovely little tree," she began, "and it was so nice of Mrs. Steinberg to bring it to us." (I now realize that, had my mother been of an earlier, more superstitious background, after saying that sentence she would have automatically spit three times and recited a Yiddish curse. But, third generation American that she was, all she could muster was a veiled, ironic tone, which my sister and I, in our excitement, missed.)

"But you know," she continued, "Christmas isn't our holiday. We have Chanukah and Passover and Purim. And I read in yesterday's Providence Journal that there are some children, Christian children here in Providence, who are so poor that they won't even have a Christmas tree for their holiday."

"So, why don't we do this: let's decorate this tree, make it look especially nice, and then, let's phone the police department and ask if they'll give it to some poor children who don't have a tree of their own?"

Touchdown. Bullseye. And grand slam. Mom scored a big one. With her clever proposition, she not only distracted us from begging to keep the tree, but diverted our focus to the point where we simply couldn't wait to get it out of our house and on its way to other children.

Mom placed a call, while my sister and I went to work hanging Mrs. Steinberg's ornaments on the tree, adding some of our own small objects, and gathering toys and books and games to accompany the donation. About an hour later, two very large Providence policemen, wearing their black leather jackets, with guns and nightsticks and handcuffs hanging from their belts, lumbered up the stairs. They spoke briefly with my mother and her wide-eyed children, offered some kind words of gratitude, and then departed, carrying one large bag of stuffed toys, some boxes of other gifts. And a three-foot tall, artfully decorated Douglas fir Christmas tree.

That scene remains one of the happiest memories of my childhood.

Rabbi Bob Alper (www.bobalper.com) is a full-time stand-up comic, performing internationally. He is the author of the inspiring, humorous *Life Doesn't Get Any Better Than This* (Liguori), now in its fifth printing.

Schoenberg Memorial Chapels

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COMING EVENTS

VISITING SCHOLAR AT AKSE

The Adas Kodesch Shel Emeth Men's Club and Adult Education Committee will present Leib Irons as its first visiting scholar of 2005. Irons, a rabbinic intern at the Riverdale Jewish Center in New York City, will discuss "The Bachelor/Bachelorette: a Look at Jewish Matchmaking Through the Ages" at a Sunday, January 9th program which is open to the entire community. Irons will trace the history of matchmaking from our forefather Isaac, to Yentl and Jdate and other electronic Jewish dating services. The mystical tradition of "basherte" will also be explored.

The free presentation begins at 10:00 a.m. preceded by breakfast at 9:30. The cost for the breakfast is \$4. For additional information, please call the synagogue office at 302-762-2705.

BETH SHALOM WINTER FILM SERIES BEGINS SUNDAY AT THEATRE N

The Rabbi Jacob Kraft Educational Foundation of Congregation Beth Shalom proudly presents its inaugural "Winter Film Series" at Theatre N in Wilmington. The films begin this Sunday (December 26) at 7:00 PM with the acclaimed "Broken Wings," a contemporary story of an ordinary Israeli family and the trials of their lives. Next, on Sunday, January 2 at 7:00 PM is the French comedy "G-d is Great, I'm Not" starring Audrey Tautou ("Amelie") as a non-Jew who makes her Jewish love become more observant.

On Sunday, January 9 at 7:00 PM "The Holy Land" will be shown. This is a mystery with dark political and criminal undercurrents that takes a look at the seamier side of Israeli life.

The final show will be Sunday, January 23 at 8:00 PM. "Gloomy Sunday" is a romantic melodrama set in pre-World War II Budapest that features an agreed upon love trian-

gle and international intrigue as the Nazis occupy Hungary.

As the series is a fundraiser for Congregation Beth Shalom, donations are \$11.00 per ticket or \$40.00 for the entire series. Advance tickets are available for purchase by credit card by calling 302 571 4699 or online at www.theatren.org. Tickets can be purchased at the theater starting one hour before each show. Validated parking is available in the City Center garage on 11th Street between West and Tatnall Streets. Bring in your parking ticket and we'll validate it so it's \$1.00 to park. Parking meters are free all weekend too!

A discussion will follow each film and refreshments will be available. Keep your ticket stub for your tax deduction. For further information, call Beth Shalom at 302 654 4462.

HELP! I HATE MY JEWISH (OR NON-JEWISH) IN-LAWS!

Join Congregation Beth Emeth Outreach on Sunday 1/16 at 1PM in the Temple Lounge for the Interfaith Family Monthly Potluck Lunch. Bring your favorite lunch food, and your extended family (grandparents, uncles, aunts, children, and in-laws ... whether you hate them or not) - both Jewish and non-Jewish, to eat and discuss the challenges of being a family with diverse religious traditions and belief systems. Free child care for children under 12. Please - no shellfish, pork products, or meat with dairy dishes. This event is free but you must call the Temple Office at (302) 764-2393 or email beout2@minque.com to register. For more info visit www.bethemethoutreach.com.

JUDAISM FOR INTERFAITH FAMILIES & MORE

Congregation Beth Emeth Outreach invites you to join interfaith couples and those new to, or curious about Judaism for its special 6 week interactive course. All questions on Judaism will be answered and discussed in a friendly, support-

ive atmosphere. The course starts Thursday, 1/27/05 at 7 p.m. and meets weekly through 3/3/05. The instructor is Dr. Henry Schenker. Space is limited! Please pre-register by calling the temple office at (302) 764-2393 or email beout2@minque.com. Visit www.bethemethoutreach.com for more info.

PLAN AHEAD FOR DELAWARE GRATZ SPRING SEMESTER

Registration is now underway for the second semester at Delaware Gratz Hebrew High School. New courses, which begin in January, are: THURSDAYS

500 Israel Advocacy - Designed to empower high school students to respond to anti-Israel/anti-Jewish acts and rhetoric in an intelligent and informed manner when they arrive at college. Taught by Dr. Mark Wagman and the Jewish Community Relations Committee of the Jewish Federation of Delaware.

607 Mishna - Teaching the Law orally was considered the best way to learn, as it encouraged close relationships between students and teachers. Learn about Judah the Prince and experience Mishna. Taught by Rabbi Chuni Vogel SUNDAYS

110* Biblical Interpretation - Gratz College credit course where students will use traditional commentary to analyze the interpretations of various Biblical texts. Students will learn to develop and present a D'var Torah including their analysis of the passage and traditional commentary on it, and a current event illuminated by the passage. Taught by University of Pennsylvania Scholar-In-Residence Tamar Jacobowitz.

606 Jewish Potpourri - What students should know as they prepare for college. Discussion of Israel, major religions, response to Holocaust deniers, key points about Judaism and whatever relevant current event is "hot." Taught by John

Elzufon, Esq.

Contact Marlene Milunsky, Principal, for more information: marlene@delawaregratz.org or call (302) 478-8100.

YOUTH PHILANTHROPY BOARD INVITES GRANT APPLICATIONS

The Delaware Community Foundation's (DCF) Youth Philanthropy Board will award a total of \$10,000 in grants in 2005 for youth programs to schools and qualified 501 (c)(3) organizations in New Castle County. Applications will be accepted from schools, clubs and civic/community organizations for (1) programs that support pregnant teens or teen parents and (2) programs that support physically disabled youth ages 12-18. Individual grant requests must not exceed \$2,500.

Each grant request must be submitted on a 2005 Youth Philanthropy Board Grant Application Form, which can be printed from the DCF Web site, www.delcf.org, or by contacting Beth Bouchelle, Director of Grants Administration, at 504-5239 or bbouchelle@delcf.org. Completed applications must be postmarked or delivered to the Foundation by January 7, 2005. Grant recipients will be announced in May 2005. Please contact Beth Bouchelle for more information.

CITY THEATRE HOLDING OPEN AUDITIONS

Attention thespians. Wilmington's City Theatre Company is holding opening auditions on Sunday, January 16th at the Baby Grand Theatre, 818 North Market Street for Company. This award-winning production by Stephen Sondheim, will run from April 29-May 21. Non-equity males, ages 25-50 and females, ages 21-50 are needed. Applicants should bring a headshot and resume to the audition as well as two songs, one ballad and one uptempo. All roles are unpaid.

To schedule an appointment for an audition, please call Michael Gray at 302-658-7897.

BECOME A BRONFMAN YOUTH FELLOW IN ISRAEL

Applications are now available for the 2005 Bronfman Youth Fellowships in Israel. The fellowships provide an opportunity for 26 students entering the 12th grade to spend five weeks in Israel this summer. Students from all over North America will be selected based on their character, intellectual interests, special talents and leadership qualities. Merit, not financial need, is the standard for selection.

Bronfman Fellows will participate in seminars and dialogues with a diverse rabbinic faculty and will meet with some of Israel's most prominent political, cultural and literary figures.

This year's program begins on June 27th with a seminar in New York City. The students will return from Israel on August 3rd. All educational expenses are covered by the program, which includes round-trip international transportation, room and board and travel while in Israel. All meals are kosher.

High school students who will enter the 12th grade in the fall of 2005 may apply directly online at www.bronfman.org. Completed applications must be postmarked no later than January 5th. Finalists will be notified by February 1st.

SUMMER SCHOLARSHIP AVAILABLE

The Sylvia & Isadore N. Silverman Scholarship Fund will be awarding its 16th annual Scholarship to a deserving youth for a Jewish summer experience in camp or Israel. Applications may be picked up at the Adas Kodesch Shel Emeth office, Washington Street Ext. and Torah Way, Wilmington, DE 19802, and must be returned by the deadline on March 1, 2005.

The Fund was established in 1989 to honor the Silverman's 55th wedding anniversary by their four daughters and many friends.

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* Super Week Co-Chairs

Congratulations to Greg Millman, winner of the iPod Mini, for getting the most increased gifts during Super Week!

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